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LETTER OF M. HENRI FROIDEVAUX.

GEOGRAPHY AT THE UNIVERSAL EXPOSITION IN 1900.—Various writers have attempted to describe the inexhaustible mine of geographical information in the present Exposition, but none have succeeded better than MM. Emmanuel de Margerie and Louis Raveneau. Whoever wishes to study the cartographical portion of the Exposition must read in the *Annales de Géographie* the work of these gentlemen on "Cartography at the Universal Exposition in 1900." It will there be seen that Class 14 of Group III (Maps and Apparatus of Geography and Cosmography. Topography) is far from embracing all the maps at the Exposition.

None the less this Class 14 contains numerous and most interesting documents: the remarkable series of maps of Corsica, exhibited by Prince Roland Bonaparte, which reveal in all its details the cartographical history of the island; the collection of plans of Paris formed by M. Mareuse, and the original notes of cartographers and explorers from the archives of the Société de Géographie, especially attract attention in the historical section (together with an admirable terrestrial globe of the Mercator school, in silver-gilt, belonging to M. le Provost de Launay). To this should be joined, in Class 15, some most interesting old instruments, formerly employed by the geographical engineers during the campaigns of the First Empire, and later by the Officers of the General Staff, for their astronomical and geodetical operations and for topographical surveys.

Extremely interesting, also, are some relief maps exhibited by the Geographical Service of the Army and also by the house of Hachette, whose geographical work is so admirably directed by M. Schrader. Other remarkable reliefs are those of M. J. Chardon (France 1:200,000) and M. C. H. Perron (Switzerland, according to the terrestrial curve, on a scale of 1:100,000). These prove in the clearest manner that even on a small scale it is by no means necessary to exaggerate elevations. Worthy of mention also are M. Imfeld's relief (the Bernese Alps, on a scale of 1:25,000; Mont Cervin at 1:5,000) and others showing parts of the Swiss territory, the work of M. F. Becker, M. S. Simon and M. A. Heim. Very remarkable, also, are the relief map of the Semmering railway exhibited in the Austrian group, and that of the Yellowstone National Park, the work of Mr. Edwin E.

Howell, who exhibits also a geographico-historical relief of the Island of Manhattan. Very instructive reliefs are those of the State of California by George C. Richards and George Starb; of the Seine Maritime (elevation exaggerated three times) by M. Muret; of Algeria, by M. Molinier-Violle; of Madagascar by M. J. Hansen; and of New Caledonia by Commandant Laporte.

Attention must be called to the hydrographic atlases of the Mekong and of the Niger by the distinguished explorers Simon, Mazeran and Hourst, and to the maps, both printed and manuscript, of many countries (Germany, Austria, Denmark, Japan, the United States, etc.) illustrating the river systems, the mineralogy, the industrial or agricultural resources. From this point of view Russia especially calls for notice; her pedologic exhibition (*pedology* is the name given to the study of the soils) is in every way remarkable, and shows the importance of the science which was in its infancy at the Exposition of 1889. The collection of maps, books and specimens of every kind assembled in Group VII is full of instruction in its patient and minute analysis of the Russian soil as displayed in the fine map on the scale of 1:2,520,000 by MM. Sibirtzeff, Tanfilieff and Ferkhmine.

A cartographical work of great importance, still in process of completion, is M. Julien Thoulet's lithologic map of the French coasts. The portion exhibited contains twelve maps, which show the character of the soundings along the shore from the bay of Isigny to the estuary of the Gironde.

Mention must be made also of the photographic collections illustrating the forms of the surface, the meteorology, the flora and fauna, the anthropology and the ethnography of all parts of the world, without omitting the extremely fine photographs of clouds, made in the United States by Messrs. A. J. Henry and A. McAdie, and in France by M. Alfred Angot, and the interesting exhibit of the Club Alpin. Of mountain photographs none is more magnificent than Vittorio Sella's Mt. St. Elias.

Not the least impressive among these endless collections are the photographs of Algeria—veritable topographic documents—which bring out the intensity of the erosion in this country, where sudden and violent downpours of water follow on long drouths, and the vegetation is too sparse to afford serious protection to the soil.

Of the panoramas exhibited unusual interest attaches to that of the Trans-Siberian Railway, executed in the most conscientious manner by Dr. Piassetski, and the superb panorama of Mont Blanc, by M. Fr. Schrader. The point of view in the latter is from the

glacier des Périades, on the side of the Tacul, at an elevation of more than 9,000 feet.

In the Canadian exhibit, the mineral riches of the Dominion are displayed as far as possible in the order of the Provinces, the place of honor naturally falling to the gold region of the Klondike. Other auriferous countries display their wealth; West Australia leading the way with an exhibit of gold nuggets to the value of more than 500,000 dollars. But the most complete mineral exhibit, without question, is the systematic collection of the minerals of the United States, according to Dana's classification, brought together by the combined efforts of eight universities.

In the midst of the crowds and the excitement of the Exposition the return of M. Fernand Foureau passed almost without notice, and there were few persons at the Lyons station to greet the explorer, who had just crossed the Sahara from the south of Algeria to Lake Tchad, and had returned to France by way of the Gulf of Guinea. In a future letter, after hearing M. Foureau's report to the Société de Géographie, I shall set down the principal scientific results of his journey.

Here it is interesting to record that the "Military Territory of the Countries and Protectorates of the Tchad" has received a definitive organization. It is constituted by the basins of the Kemo and the Shari; it begins on the Ubanghi, at the confluence of the Kemo with the great affluent of the Congo, and it is bounded on the north by the shores of Lake Tchad. From Goulfeï to Fort Archambault, along the line of defence of the Shari, will be stationed the infantry charged with the protection of the Territory, while it is proposed to quarter the cavalry and artillery at Massenia.

A treaty, recently signed, puts an end to the questions of boundary which had arisen between Spain and France in Africa. In the Western Sahara, France keeps the Adrar and the Sebkha d'Idjil, and this disposes of the question of the Rio de Oro; while to the north of the French Congo, France reserves a right of préemption on the Spanish territory, comprised between the German frontier of the Kamerun and a line drawn from the mouth of the River Muni to the ninth degree of longitude, west from Paris.

Of geographical publications in these recent months there is not much to note, but I must mention the second volume of the French translation of Suess's *Das Antlitz der Erde*, executed under the direction of M. Emm. de Margerie, with a conscientious care that cannot be too highly praised.

The Ministry of Public Instruction has issued the account of the travels of Captain Cupet in Laos, and among the savages of south-eastern Indo-China. This work forms Vol. III. of the section "Géographie et Voyages" in the series of the Pavie mission. It is very attractive, and is accompanied by excellent maps.

A special place must be reserved for the work of Mgr. Alph. Favier, Vicar Apostolic of Peking, on that great city. In this volume, which bears the title: *Peking. Histoire et Description*, the eminent author gives a most interesting account of the history and the life of the capital of the vast Asiatic empire, under its every aspect, and has produced a work to be read and to be kept for its permanent value.

Paris, September, 1900.